

Message Text

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46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INT-05 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15

STR-04 CEA-01 L-03 H-02 DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SAJ-01

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R 181418Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2990

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, UK

SUBJECT: NUM EXECUTIVE COMES TO THE AID OF GOVERNMENT

WAGES POLICY

REF: (A) LONDON 10485 (B) LONDON 10958

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SUMMARY - IMPORTANT SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S WAGES

POLICY CAME FROM AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE -- THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS -- FOLLOWING A DECISION OF THE NUM EXECUTIVE (14-10) TO BACK THE 6 POUND WAGE LIMIT. THE VOTE, REPRESENTS A CLEAR, IF CLOSE, VICTORY FOR THE MODERATES IN THE UNION. THE DECISION NOW GOES TO THE RANK AND FILE MINERS IN A SPECIAL PIT BALLOT, AND THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THE RECOMMENDATION WILL BE ACCEPTED. A "YES" VOTE AT THE PITS WILL BOLSTER SUPPORT FOR WAGE RESTRAINT AT THE TUC CONGRESS AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, WILL BE REFLECTED IN A SHARP MODERATION OF NUM DEMANDS IN THE NEXT WAGE ROUND. END SUMMARY.

1. IT IS GENERALLY EXPECTED THAT THE TUC BLACKPOOL CONGRESS IN SEPTEMBER WILL ENDORSE THE GOVERNMENT'S 6 POUND WAGE RESTRAINT BUT NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT FROM SOME UNIONS, MOST NOTABLY THE AMALGAMATED UNION OF ENGINEERING WORKERS (AUEW) WHICH IS BRITAIN'S SECOND LARGEST UNION. IF THE MINERS' PIT BALLOT RESULTS IN APPROVAL OF NUM EXECUTIVE'S DECISION, IT WILL NOT ONLY HELP TO ENLARGE THE MAJORITY AT BLACKPOOL IN SUPPORT OF WAGE RESTRAINT, BUT WHAT IS MOST CRUCIAL, IS LIKELY TO MEAN THAT THE NUM WILL, IN THE END, ACCEPT THE 6 POUND LIMIT DURING THE NEXT WAGE ROUND.

3. THE NUM'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE AT SCARBOROUGH HAD THRUST BACK A LEFT-WING EFFORT TO GET THE NUM EXECUTIVE TO "DEMAND" 100 POUNDS A WEEK FOR MINERS WHICH, IF ACCEPTED, WOULD HAVE COMMITTED THE MINERS AND VERY SERIOUSLY DAMAGED ANY VOLUNTARY WAGE RESTRAINT EFFORTS (REF A). THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE ACTION -- IF CONFIRMED BY THE PIT BALLOT -- IS A CONTINUATION OF THE MODERATION EXPRESSED AT SCARBOROUGH. A NUM SOURCE TOLD US HE NOW FULLY EXPECTS THE MINERS TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE'S RECOMMENDATION. HE SAID THERE ARE "GENUINE FEARS FROM THE RANK AND FILE" ABOUT THE ECONOMY, ABOUT CONFRONTATION. HE ADDS THAT A SOUNDING FROM THE "GRASS-ROOTS INDICATES THAT THEY (THE RANK AND FILE) HAVE HAD BLOODY ENOUGH IN TAKING ON THE GOVERNMENT YEAR AFTER YEAR". THIS APPEARS TO US TO BE A REASONABLE INTERPRETATION. IN ANY CASE, THE MINERS' CURRENT ATTITUDE IS A PLEASING CONTRAST FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO THE "FUSS AND FEATHERS" RESULTING FROM PROPOSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCREASES IN MP'S SALARIES (REF B).
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